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## REVIEWS.

*Omitted Chapters of History, disclosed in the Life and Papers of Edmund Randolph, Governor of Virginia, First Attorney-General, United States Secretary of State.* By MONCURE D. CONWAY. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1888. — 8vo, 401 pp.

Mr. Conway's volume is well-timed : in these centennial years every important fact about the organization of our government is welcomed. These *Omitted Chapters of History* are a significant contribution to our knowledge of the political events in which Edmund Randolph bore a leading part. The services of Randolph in the constitutional development of the United States are clearly set forth. The Virginia governor played a leading part in the federal convention, sketched the general plan of the constitution, and introduced the detailed plan. Four features of the instrument, as adopted, he vigorously opposed : the re-eligibility of the President ; a single executive ; the equality of the states in the Senate ; the control of commerce by a bare majority of Congress. He favored a second revisory convention and Franklin supported his motion. When the delegates declined to vote for a second convention, Randolph did not vote for or sign the constitution as it went forth to the states. Yet in the Virginia convention he battled zealously for ratification, believing union a paramount necessity, and amendment more probably gained within the Union.

Mr. Conway shows Randolph to have favored a strong federal government with a negative on state legislation. The provision included in Randolph's draft would, if adopted, have made nullification impossible. In the original draft of Madison's *Virginia Resolutions* of 1798, there was a nullification clause. An unpublished manuscript among Madison's papers shows that the elimination of this clause was owing to Randolph's criticism of Madison's unconstitutional state theories.

As first attorney-general, Randolph organized the department of justice and adapted the judiciary system of the country to its functions. He had conduct of the famous case of *Chisholm vs. Georgia*, and firmly maintained, even against the protest of Virginia, the liability of a state to be sued, till "sovereignty, trembling at once with dignity and terror, hastened to answer the Supreme Court by the eleventh amendment." Had Randolph accepted the proposal to go upon the supreme bench, he

would have been in his right place, and would not have encountered the cloud that has obscured his fame.

The main purpose of Mr. Conway's volume is to disperse this cloud of obloquy that has so long shrouded the name of Edmund Randolph. In his labor of love and justice, Mr. Conway has been successful. So far as Randolph's integrity is concerned, Mr. Conway has shown, by documents in French, British and American archives, how baseless is the imputation that Randolph sought, in secret collusion with the French minister, to thwart the policy of the administration he served. He has also conclusively disposed of the fiction by which he is made to appear on the books of the United States Treasury as a defaulter. From the fresh materials gathered Mr. Conway has painted a new portrait wholly unlike the traditional one drawn by Jefferson.

Mr. Conway finely and justly defines the contrast between the politics of Jefferson and the politics of Randolph. The "democratic imperialism" of Jefferson is in our own time contending with the "democratic republicanism" of Randolph. Nothing but affection for Washington and duty to his country kept Randolph in that difficult secretaryship of State, in which Jefferson had been too astute a politician to remain, and in which he had sowed the wind and left Randolph to reap the whirlwind. In the storm aroused by Jay's treaty, with its obnoxious clauses against American ships carrying provisions on the open sea, Randolph was overthrown. The Federalist leaders in the cabinet were to a man committed to the treaty; Randolph opposed it and had persuaded Washington to withhold his signature till these clauses were withdrawn. Political excitement ran high; even calm lookers-on deemed civil war imminent. At this juncture a long despatch of Fauchet to his government, intercepted at sea and sent to Hammond, the British minister, came into Washington's hands. The letter contained imputations on the honor of Randolph, Hamilton and even Washington himself. Fauchet's letter decided the fate of the treaty, gave a complete triumph to the British party, and led to the downfall of Randolph. Washington at once signed the treaty with a protest, the preparation of which he committed to Randolph. Not till the protest was completed was Randolph confronted with the despatch that had reversed his policy. During the ten days previous to the disclosure of the French despatch, Washington had been twice a guest at Randolph's table, had given Randolph the place of honor at his own table, had lavished exceptional affection on the secretary he was so soon to treat as a traitor. If Washington really believed Randolph guilty of perfidy, it would be difficult to think him free from duplicity in the unusual attentions he bestowed upon the secretary. If he deemed Randolph innocent of intrigue, why did he sign the treaty, exclude his most intimate friend and consult with that friend's avowed enemies in a

matter that concerned Randolph's honor." Washington's estimate of men was so accurate that we are wont to accept his views of them, and his conduct towards them, without question. What he thought of Randolph and why he acted towards him as he did we do not know. Mr. Conway's ingenious suppositions, fervent arguments and new discoveries leave these questions enigmas still. According to Mr. Conway, Washington yielded to stern political necessity and took a step in his treatment of Randolph which his heart and judgment did not approve. He was forced to choose between the sacrifice of Randolph and the wreck of his own administration. He could not save Randolph, and but for that sacrifice must have shared his fate. Nor could he at any time previous to his death have done Randolph justice without seriously affecting the foreign relations of the country. His unusual tokens of confidence and affection he intended should say to Randolph after his fall: "I struck you down, but I never doubted you." This explanation will hardly be accepted as final.

Mr. Conway has rendered a service to students of American history by his arduous and fruitful labors in a field largely untilled. He has made a protracted search among unpublished manuscripts, state archives and family papers, previously unexamined or inaccessible. He has elucidated these papers in a style, dignified, forcible and at times dramatic.

EDWARD P. SMITH.

*John Brown.* By DR. HERMANN VON HOLST. Edited by FRANK PRESTON STEARNS. Boston, Cupples & Hurd, 1887.

This volume of 232 pages consists of a monograph by Professor von Holst, preceded by 54 pages of introductory matter by Mr. Frank Preston Stearns, and followed by 59 pages of other matter, consisting of a poem, a letter from a Boston physician to "a lady patient" about John Brown's grave, and more matter from Mr. Stearns. Mr. Frank Preston Stearns appears to have no perception of the ridiculous. He says in his preface that he has been aroused to a sense of the danger which might result from the late attacks upon the memory of John Brown—not only to that hero, "but to all heroism in the future." Naturally enough, when he perceived a calamity of that size impending, Mr. Stearns felt that he ought to do what he could to avert it. He accordingly bestirred himself to "find some means by which the baleful influence of these attacks might be counteracted," and found it in the account of John Brown by Professor von Holst. This he employed Mr. Phillipe Marcou to translate for him, and this translation, which seems well done, he has unblushingly published with the garnishments above mentioned.